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GENERAL NOTES.

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THE OCCURRENCE OF RICHARDSON'S GROUSE (*Dendrapus obscurus richardsonii*) IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS, EASTERN WASHINGTON.-- The Richardson's Grouse is plentiful in the Blue Mountains where it is usually to be found near the tops of the scantily timbered ridges and never to my knowledge in the heavily timbered areas. The ridges are only partly covered with coniferous trees and underbrush, including huckleberry, but have much space either open or but slightly forest clad where bunchgrass, mountain forage, and plants abound. Here many of the grouse seem to spend the entire year but a goodly number, however, come out in March of each year, to nest later in the brushy, but almost treeless waste or grazing land which slopes steeply back from the streams and drainage systems of the foothills of the adjacent mountains. They return in September or early October to feed in common with the resident mountain grouse on the foliage of the fir trees, as is the well known habit of this species.

The home of several pairs of these grouse during the breeding season is found among a rugged and at places precipitous line of hills that rise from the Touchet river to the south and west of Dayton. Having promised Mr. J. Hooper Bowles to make a special effort to secure a set of Richardson's Grouse with nest for his collection I succeeded, after considerable search, in locating a nest on April 25, 1921, on the steep side of a short gulch about half a mile from the city of Dayton. It contained eight nicely marked eggs of Richardson's Grouse, and much to my surprise four eggs of the Ring-necked Pheasant which, from appearances, were deposited by two birds. Two were rather light for this bird while two were heavily colored, which Mr. Bowles thinks leaves no doubt as to their being laid by two birds.

I think the Richardson's Grouse here will not be much, if any, lessened by hunting, for the large area where they are the most numerous is so difficult to reach that the average hunter does not care to make the effort. Part of the forest reserve in the Blue Mountains is so rough that it is little used, if at all, for grazing, and I am always impressed by the great number of these grouse seen whenever I penetrate these rough places; so it seems to me that the Richardson's Grouse is perhaps the one native game bird found here whose supply is quite secure.

S. H. Lyman,
Dayton, Wn.

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ANCIENT MURRELET (*Synthliboramphus antiochus*) AT CLALLAM BAY, WASH.-- On Feb. 5, (1922) my friend Mr. Thomas Rowe, who is employed as foreman at Goodyear Logging Company camp No. 2, brought down a dead bird, which he had found about two weeks before at the camp, and which proved to be of this species. The specimen was in a fair state of preservation, due to the cold weather, and made up into a fairly good skin, (minus one foot, which had been gnawed off by rodents), but its condition was such that the sex could not be determined.

Mr. Rowe estimates the distance at about five miles (south) from Clallam Bay, to where this bird was found.

The identification of this specimen was kindly verified by Mr. D. E. Brown of Seattle.

C. Lien,
Clallam Bay, Wash.

NOTES ON THE ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK (*Archibuteo lagopus sanoti-johannis*).-- Reports reached me from time to time that several large "hen Hawks" had been seen about Huntingdon and Sumas prairie, and on Nov. 27 one of these birds, a young female, was sent to me and was found to be a Rough-legged Hawk. It was in good plumage, very fat, and its stomach contained the breast of a Mallard duck. It measured 23 1/4 inches in length and 56 inches in extent.

A week later I took a trip to Sumas prairie and was given an adult male Rough-legged Hawk, killed the day previous by the Provincial Game Warden, Mr. R. A. Cunning. This bird's under parts and tarsi were more darkly coloured than the young female and the tail showed a distinct subterminal dark band which was wanting in the female. During the day two or three of these hawks were seen, but always very distant. About 10.30 a.m. one was seen to rise from the ground and on going to the spot a dead Mallard was found with the breast eaten away. The Mallard had evidently been killed the day before by some hunter, as the feathers were covered with frost, but the breast had been freshly eaten. This particular Rough-legged kept well out of gun shot, but not so far away that the beautiful dark colouring could not be seen. It was almost entirely black and was apparently a male bird. In the middle of the afternoon it was seen in company with a light coloured female flying across the Prairie towards the mountains. The male bird secured measured 21 inches long by 52 1/2 inches in extent and its stomach was quite empty. From information gathered from hunters, farmers and others it would appear that these Rough-legged Hawks are much more numerous this year than usual.

Kenneth Racey,
Vancouver, B. C.

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DEPREDACTIONS OF DUCKS. -- For several years past the oyster growers of Thurston county, Washington, in the vicinity of Olympia have been shooting large numbers of waterfowl found on and near the oyster beds. Last year this practice was stopped by the Bureau, as it was not considered necessary to kill the birds to keep the depredations down to a minimum.

During the latter part of January of this year I made some observations on Oyster bay and Mud bay and found large numbers of Scaup or blue-bill ducks congregating there, and there is considerable damage resulting from the birds feeding on the oyster beds. It has been recommended that the growers use blank black powder charges fired from a gun to frighten the birds off the beds, and we hope to avoid killing any birds.

Residents of Tillamook county, Oregon, recently complained of the depredations of ducks in that vicinity, and on February 8 I found thousands of Widgeon feeding on the meadows a short way out of town. The birds were feeding in one vast flock, and I believe it safe to say there were at least seven to eight thousand birds in this one flock, all Widgeon. It is my opinion that little damage is resulting from these birds; the grass that is being consumed is not important to grazing at this season of the year and by the time the stock are put on the pastures the birds will have migrated north. It is a wonderful sight as well as feeling to be near such a large flock of birds; it was possible to walk right up to within three or four hundred yards of this flock of birds and by using some cover one could get within a hundred and fifty yards of them.

R. C. Steele,
Portland, Oregon, Feb. 14, 1922.

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NOTES FROM TACOMA, WN.** Land-tailed Pigeons (Columba fasciata fasciata) are extremely plentiful this spring in the vicinity of Tacoma, in fact, much more numerous than I have ever seen them before. This is a direct and most satisfactory result of the legal protection that has been given them for the past few years, prior to which they were very nearly wiped out in this vicinity. Their numbers have showed a satisfactory increase last year and the year before, but this year it is astonishing.

Buffle-heads (Charitonetta albeola) were numerous in the fresh water lakes and marshes near Tacoma this spring and still are at this writing (May 11), which is unusually late for them to be found in numbers. I am hoping that some of them will take a fancy to my Hooded Merganser boxes and spend the summer with us, although it is probable that the migratory instinct will prove too strong for them.

Tree Swallows (Iridoprocne bicolor) are again numerous in the vicinity of Tacoma for the first time in at least ten years. Prior to that they were always plentiful, but for some reason suddenly almost stopped coming.

Birds of all kinds are very much more numerous than they were in 1921, when they were so scarce as to cause me very considerable anxiety. It would be interesting if we could know why they should be so very scarce one year, and extremely plentiful the next. Of course food is the reason in some species, but this would not seem to account for the great majority of them.

J. Hooper Bowles, Tacoma, Wn.

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FOX SPARROWS. -- An unusual number of fox sparrows (spc. ?) were seen this spring. Those noted through April and early May seemed to be the Shumagin Fox Sparrow (Passerella iliaca unalaschensis). The writer is well aware that the subspecies of our fox sparrows cannot be determined in the field, but the birds seen were of large size and quite gray of color. All of the specimens collected seemed to be of this form.

A Fox Sparrow (Passerella iliaca iliaca) was collected on April 23, 1922. This is, I think, the second record for the state. The first bird was collected by Mr. Thomas D. Burleigh on February 15, 1920.

D. E. Brown, Seattle, Wn.

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Samuel F. Rathbun of Seattle reports that up to April 1, 1922, more ducks have been observed in the White River valley and around Lake Washington than in 15 years; not in hundreds but in thousands. He also states that more wild pigeons have been seen in the more settled sections than in 15 years, due undoubtedly to the protection which they now have under the migratory bird law. Mr. Rathbun observed the Black Swift on the morning of May 18 which is much earlier this year than usual.

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A CASE OF MIXED EGGS. -- A bird box in one gable of my garage is annually occupied by Violet-green Swallows, (Tachycineta thalassina lepidus). In the opposite gable is a box that has been occupied with similar regularity by Pacific House Wrens (Troglodytes aedon parkmanii). Last spring the Wrens attempted to jump the claim of the Swallows, apparently having become dissatisfied with their own former quarters. The Swallows appeared promptly and succeeded in ousting them. The Wrens remained about the place but refused to occupy their old home. On June 12 the Swallows completed their set of five eggs. On June 17 I discovered that there was a sixth egg in the nest; not the white egg of the Swallows but the heavily freckled egg of the Wren. If Jennie Wren could not be mistress of the house she could at least show the Swallows a Cowbird trick. Later, in July, the Wrens moved into this nest and brought out a brood early in August.

J. M. Edson, Bellingham, Wn.